PROVINCIAL POLITICS,

1890.

THE

PREMIER'S ADDRESS

TO HIS CONSTITUENTS,

ON THE

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

MAY 31ST, 1890.

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MAY 31st, 1890.

To the Electors of the North Riding of Oxford:

GENTLEMEN,—I accepted gratefully my nomination by the Reform party of North Oxford to represent for another term the banner Reform constituency of the Province. I was glad to receive this fresh evidence that the interest of the electors is as strong as ever in Reform principles, and in the Reform party, and in myself as for the time its leader in Provincial affairs. I have now had the honour of representing you for eighteen continuous years, a much longer period than any of your former members, resident or non-resident. During all these years I have had none of the usual influences to help me which I should have had if I had been a resident of the riding. The bond between us has been our common love for the Reform cause, and our common views on public questions. Having been so long your representative, and having now been elected by acclamation for another term, for which I thank you all, I take this opportunity of saying that, should I live out this term, and remain in public life, I should be glad in the Parliament which follows to welcome as member for North Oxford in the Legislative Assembly, in place of myself, one of the many resident Reformers who have been active supporters of the good cause, and have the qualifications which the position requires. A selection may be difficult,

there being so many to choose from, but before the time comes public opinion may settle on some one of them whom all will rejoice to support. Though in the last years of my public life I may represent another constituency, I shall never forget what I owe to North Oxford.

You are aware that during the whole of the present contest I have been prevented from taking an active part at public meetings by reason of a cold which I caught some weeks after the close of the last session of the Legislature, and which has left me with a hoarseness that for the time makes public speaking impossible for me, though otherwise my health has never been better. Though you have no election work in North Oxford, yet some of you are assisting elsewhere, and all of you are interested in the principal questions discussed. I wish to state to the electors of the Province in some form some of the things which I should have said at public meetings if I had been able; and I know no fitter way of doing this now than in this letter of thanks to my own esteemed constituents.

THE REFORM RECORD.

I have the satisfaction of knowing that after eighteen years of office, the Reform Government has the increased confidence of the great body of Reformers throughout the Province, and has to a large extent the approval of Conservatives also, many of whom have heretofore voted for the Reform candidates for the Provincial Legislature, though they vote the Conservative ticket at the Dominion elections. It is gratifying thus to know that the great body of our friends are satisfied, or more than satisfied, with our record of useful legislation, of prudent, economical, effective and honest administration, and of successful maintenance of important Provincial rights; that they appreciate the danger to the country of our places being taken by the lieutenants and party allies and dependents of Sir John Macdonald and the Dominion Government; and are more zealous than ever to avert that calamity.

THE SECTARIAN CRY.

In the absence of any legitimate political capital, an attempt was made by our opponents in 1883 to detach from us Roman Catholic votes by the cry that we were not fair to Roman Catholics—that my Protestant colleagues and myself were too bigoted Protestants to be fair to Roman Catholics—and that Mr. Meredith and his party were their true friends. The pro-Popery policy of 1883 was afterwards abandoned because it did not bring

to our opponents votes enough to give them office; and the cry in 1886 was, and the cry in 1890 is, that the reverse of all this is the truth; that for the eighteen years that the Reform party has had predominance in Provincial politics we have been too favorable to Roman Catholics; that in fact we have "truckled to the Roman Catholic Hierarchy"; that we have allowed them to have a "controlling influence" with us; and that Roman Catholics, though only one-sixth of the population, govern everything. All these allegations are false—as false as the cry of 1883 was; and it is satisfactory to know that the great body of our Protestant supporters know them to be false. They know me to be a true Protestant now, as I have been all my life; they know that I love the faith of my fathers, the faith in which I was educated, and which, as years have rolled on, I have learned more and more to love. They know that I am too much attached to my Church to be unfaithful to its teachings, for the sake of any temporary party advantage which my unfaithfulness might give me with another Church. So the great body of Protestant Reformers everywhere take no stock in the pretence that our political opponents are truer Protestants than my Protestant colleagues and our Protestant supporters are, or are more reliable as defenders of the Protestant faith. Protestant Reformers in general keep in mind, too, that, while there are among my present opponents some sincere but mistaken men, there are among them many others who, as far as known, never took any interest in Protestantism, or in religion, until they thought they could make a political party use of their pretended zeal.

There are Roman Catholic Reformers as well as Protestant Reformers; and, as we have had the support of Protestant Reformers, we have had the support of Roman Catholic Reformers also, and we have their support still, because they believe and know that, Protestant as I am, I regard it as a duty to be fair, in legislation and in the administration of public affairs, to Romam Catholics as well as to Protestants, and that I have always endeavoured to be so according to my light and powers and opportunities; that it has been my desire, and my effort, to show that an earnest and fair-minded Protestant Premier may, without unfaithfulness to Protestants or Protestantism, be so fair to Roman Catholics that thinking persons of that faith may justly give to him their confidence. I do not want to remain Premier of Ontario any longer than I am able to be fair in both legislation and government to our people of every creed, every class and every race.

But the present religious cry, though it has not misled the great mass of Reformers, has misled some here and there; and the

special efforts of our opponents are employed in keeping up the delusion of these, and in endeavoring to increase their number; and this purpose they prosecute by most irreligious methods. While pretending to be greatly interested in religious truth, they support their efforts by falsehoods deliberately concocted and circulated in the interest of their party. Intelligent electors know that men who act thus cannot be depended upon for the defence of any form of religion, or any religious institution, Protestant or Catholic.

I venture to say that any Protestant Reformers who have felt disposed to leave their party by reason of anything which has been said in regard to Separate Schools, or to the alleged influence with us of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, have for the time omitted to look, as all should look, at the *whole* field of Provincial politics. They have overlooked all questions except the new questions dwelt upon by our opponents. They have failed for the moment to keep in mind that a change of Government involves a great deal more than a change of policy on the particular class of questions now agitated; that the change involves all other matters of legislation and Governmental action as well. These other matters, as compared with the questions relating to Separate Schools and kindred subjects, are in number as 100 to one, and perhaps as 1,000 to one.

I affirm that our position as to Separate Schools, whether viewed from a Protestant standpoint or a Catholic standpoint, or any other, is the right position for the Government to have taken, and for the Protestant people of Ontario to support the Government in taking, and that any contrary view is the result of misapprehensions and misrepresentations; that the practical importance of certain matters at issue between us and our opponents has been enormously exaggerated; and that, giving all matters their due proportionate weight, there is no reason whatever for the most sensitive Protestant Reformer to weaken in his attachment to his own political party.

Apart from the Separate School questions, Reformers who have kept themselves informed in regard to public affairs do not consider it a matter of indifference whether the Reform party or its opponents should rule in Provincial affairs. On the contrary, they regard as a great public calamity such an event as the Reform party having to give way in Provincial affairs to their opponents.

NOT A DIFFERENT PARTY.

There are many reasons for this view. Reformers and others do not think it in the interest of the Province that the control of

Provincial affairs should pass from the Reform Government to the lieutenants, party allies and dependents of the present Dominion Government. Let no one doubt that that is the relation of Mr. Meredith and his associates to the Dominion party which is in power, though occasionally or in some places some of them have the extraordinary hardihood to claim to be another and different party. They are not a different party; they are the same party; they still boast of Sir John as their Chief; they support his candidates at Dominion elections; the Dominion Government and party support Mr. Meredith and his associates at Provincial elections; these claim the support of Conservatives as such; and publicly insist that all Conservatives supporting Sir John should support Mr. Meredith also. The *Empire*, Sir John Macdonald's special organ, and all other party journals of the Dominion Government, support Mr. Meredith with as much ardor and zeal as they support the Dominion Government. In fact, the party of Mr. Meredith would be nowhere without the strength which it derives from being recognized as the same party which rules in the Dominion. Mr. Meredith and the newspapers in his interest pretend sometimes to object to the action of the Provincial Government where that of the Dominion Government in a corresponding matter is the same; but they have never opposed or objected to the action by the Dominion Government; and it has long been a notorious fact that, whenever the Dominion and Provincial Governments have been at issue on a question of Provincial rights, our opponents have always either taken actively the side of the Dominion, or endeavored otherwise to justify to the people of Ontario the course of the Dominion.

Sir John cannot go for a Protestant cry in Dominion elections, but he is willing that a Protestant cry should be used at these Provincial elections as the only chance of his Lieutenant getting into power in the Province.

The great body of Reformers see all this, and they are not deceived by the pretence that Mr. Meredith is politically any better than Sir John.

THE GOVERNMENT'S DEFENCE OF ONTARIO.

Then there are other considerations to which the great body of the people are alive. They know that the Ontario Government has had matters to deal with which were of the greatest importance to the Province, and in which the Dominion Government was opposed to the Province; that we have in every instance successfully maintained the rights of the Province; that other im-

portant questions are now pending between the Dominion and the Province; and that new questions of importance must be expected to arise from time to time hereafter.

Thus, it was the settled policy of the Dominion Government that Ontario should not be permitted to have the recently disputed territory; that we should be compelled to give it up to the Dominion law or no law; and measures were taken to accomplish that object through Manitoba. The party newspapers of the Province in the interest of Mr. Meredith and Sir John Macdonald denounced us as virtually guilty of almost all the crimes in the calendar for holding on to the possession of the territory which the Province claimed.

So, it was the policy of the Dominion Government to claim that, though every other Province was recognised as owner of the Crown lands, similarly situated as regards title to the lands in the disputed territory, yet Ontario should not be allowed to own one acre of such lands, or one stick of the timber, or one pound of the minerals, even if the territory should be held to be within its boundaries. The territory embraced half the Province, is rich in minerals, contains extensive forests of valuable timber, and includes much land suitable for agricultural purposes. I have no doubt it is capable when developed of supporting, and is destined to contain, a population of millions; this may not be its population in my time; we are preparing for generations that are to follow us. If the Ontario Government had been in the hands of the same party as the Dominion, this immense territory, with its timber and minerals and lands, would in all probability have been lost to our Province.

So with most of the Provincial Legislative rights which we have successfully maintained against the policy of the Dominion. The role of Mr. Meredith, in reference to questions of legislative jurisdiction, is to make light of them. As he makes light of them now, he would not, if in power, deem them important enough to be maintained against the Dominion. But our people do not think light of them, or deem them not worth notice; they prefer to be ruled, as far as practicable, by themselves through their own representatives; they are loyal to the Dominion within its sphere; they do not desire that sphere to be enlarged by encroachments on Provincial Legislative authority.

Let no one suppose that other important questions will not be constantly arising. At this moment we are endeavoring to settle accounts with the Dominion, and the policy of the Dominion Government is to insist, for the relief of the Dominion, on certain unjust claims which in the interest of Ontario we dispute, and which involve many hundred thousands of dollars. For the Pro-

vince to have a Provincial Government in close party alliance with the present Government at Ottawa, is for the Province to give up every right or claim which may be in opposition to any policy adopted, for party purposes or otherwise, by the Dominion Government.

In view of such facts and considerations as these, the great body of Reformers and of our other supporters perceive the importance to Ontario that its Government should not be in party alliance with any Dominion Government which in the supposed interest of the Dominion has an anti-Provincial policy, or as regards certain matters an anti-Ontario policy.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION.

There are still other reasons which give us the continued confidence of the great body of the Reformers of the Province. They know that during the last eighteen years we have been active and somewhat successful legislators; that we have availed ourselves of every branch of Legislative jurisdiction which under our system a Province has, to promote the well-being in all directions of all classes of the people.

Observers know that, amongst our measures of legislation, there have been Acts for enlarging the electorate from time to time, as public opinion was prepared for the enlargement; Acts giving to the Province the ballot, first at Provincial elections, and afterwards at municipal and certain school elections; important Acts for improving or perfecting our municipal and educational systems; important Acts for the benefit of farmers, one of the most important classes of the Canadian people, and for whose special benefit we have provided a Minister of Agriculture, that no interest affecting agriculture should be overlooked; important Acts for the benefit in various ways of mechanics and wage-earners—Acts respecting employers' liability, railway accidents, liens, etc.; Acts respecting the public health, which, as administered, have already saved hundreds of lives; Acts for reforming and simplifying the administration of justice; Acts for improving the laws of property; and Acts for improving the laws on every other subject within Provincial jurisdiction.

They know that during my Premiership we have twice had our whole Statute Law revised and consolidated under the personal supervision of members of the Government, with the assistance and approval of judges of the land and others, experts in the administration of statute law or the preparation of statutes. One

revision was in 1877, and one in 1887. On the occasion of each Revision, the whole system of Provincial Statute law was made as easy of consultation as in the nature of the case was practicable. All know that we have done this with an economy of which no example elsewhere has hitherto been discovered. The Dominion Government has consolidated the Dominion statutes but once during this period, viz., in 1886; and the work was no greater than the first of our two revisions, but it cost much more. I am not sure but it cost more than both of our revisions together.

As regards

MATTERS OF ADMINISTRATION,

all Reformers and many others give us just credit for being honest in the administration of public affairs; and they know that honesty of this kind is by no means universal in all provinces, states or countries.

They know that we have employed usefully and beneficially the revenues of the Province, and that that cannot be said of all Governments or Legislatures.

They know that we have executed with economy and due regard to the public interest the public works of the Province, and have observed like economy and care in all other objects of expenditure with which we have had to do; and they know that these things cannot be said of all Governments.

They know that our institutions relating to Agriculture, to the Public Health, our institutions for the insane and the blind, and the deaf mutes, have been managed with an efficiency which has from time to time been observed and remarked on by experts from other countries who have visited these institutions; they know that this efficient management has been effected with an economy which has no known parallel anywhere; they know that the Administration of Justice, also belonging to our jurisdiction, has been carried on with a vigor and an energy defying attack.

They know that whatever matters of administration admits of just comparison with like matters elsewhere, the comparison is never against Ontario, and is generally very greatly in its favor. They know that wherever the comparison can be made with Dominion action, the contrast in favor of our Province is very striking. An illustration of this is in sales of timber limits.

TIMBER POLICIES CONTRASTED.

The Opposition pretend that no sale of timber limits should take place until after that particular sale has been submitted to the Legislature and approved. That has never been the rule in

this Province or elsewhere, before our time or since, and has never been the law or practice in the Dominion. Legislation long before our time assigned to the Government of the day the duty of determining when sales of timber limits should be made; and Dominion legislation is to the same effect. Our sales are made as the progress of settlements and the danger of fires require, and as, in connection with these considerations, the condition of the market appears favorable to sales. It is not pretended that the Ontario Government has omitted any means of getting the best prices, or that the prices obtained were less than at the time might have been got. The fact is that, on the contrary, the sums obtained at the first sale under a Reform Government, that of 1872, Mr. Blake being then Premier, were larger than any one except the then Commissioner of Crown Lands anticipated. The Hon. Mr. MacDougall, at that time a prominent member of the Opposition, took the ground that the sums obtained were excessive, and that the sales would in his opinion be set aside for that reason by the courts. The subsequent sales were in my time, and were not less successful. In order to obtain the best prices, the Government advertises intended sales in the same manner as a private proprietor would in order to make the most of his property, and the sales are made to the highest bidders, whether they are political friends or political opponents. On the other hand, Dominion sales of timber limits are, as a rule, private sales, and are not advertised beforehand to invite competition. What is the practical result?

DOMINION SALES.

Take the case of the Indian reserve called the White Fish Reserve. This reserve was one of the limits sold by the Province in 1872. It was not then known to be an Indian reserve, and was supposed to belong to the Province. The price obtained was $9,000, or about $100 a square mile. The country was at that time wild; there were no railways of which advantage could be taken, and the limit was in consequence difficult of access. The Dominion Government afterwards discovered that the limit was an Indian reserve, and, in 1885, they resold it privately and secretly, without advertising, without communication with us, and without our knowledge. The limit had increased in value since 1872, the C. P. R. having been constructed through the limit, the country opened up, good facilities created for getting in supplies and getting out the logs and timber; and there had been no depreciation in any other respect. With all these reasons for an increased price in 1885, what did the Dominion Government accept from their friend who purchased? Not only not an increased

price, but, on the contrary, not one-tenth of what our sale of 1872 had produced, in fact not much more than one-thirtieth; the sum of $316 was accepted instead of the $9,000 which we had got 13 years before; or $3.50 a mile instead of our $100 a mile. The purchaser shortly afterwards sold his interest for $15,000, which, or more, the poor Indians ought to have got. In a short time afterwards there was a re-sale at a still larger sum.

Then again, take the case of Hunter's Island. This island was in the disputed territory, and contained a large quantity of most valuable timber. Long after the award had been made deciding the island to be within our boundaries, and while the Dominion Government was, notwithstanding, disputing with us as to the title, that Government undertook, without any communication with us and without advertising, to sell this limit to a number of persons without exacting any bonus whatever. The purchasers immediately put the limit into the market at $600,000, and would have got that sum from Chicago purchasers, but fortunately for themselves the intending purchasers discovered in time that the Ontario Government claimed the island, and they therefore declined to pay.

Take again the scandalous purchase by Mr. Rykert which has recently been ventilated. That gentleman got at private sale without any bonus a limit for which he and his partner in the transaction almost immediately afterwards received $200,000.

These are but illustrations of the different methods pursued by on the one hand the Reform Government of Ontario, and by on the other hand Mr. Meredith's party where they have had the power.

I have now mentioned some of many reasons why the great body of Reformers are of opinion that the present Ontario Government should be sustained, and why it would be a calamity if the Opposition should be successful.

ATTEMPTS TO EXCITE PROTESTANTS.

Hopeless of success otherwise, the Opposition are endeavoring to take advantage against the Ontario Government of the agitation which the Jesuit Estates Act of Quebec excited among the Protestant population of the two Provinces; and for this purpose they have added to their platform some pretences by which they hope to divert to themselves votes of ardent Protestants who do not survey the whole field of Provincial politics, and whom our opponents persuade to look merely at some questions in which

Roman Catholics are specially concerned, and to look at these unfairly.

It is an obvious fact, that there is and must always be a strong antagonism between Protestant churches and the Church of Rome. Though all recognise the Divine mission of the Saviour of mankind, the God-man, and hold some other important truths in common, there are at the same time between other doctrines of the Protestant churches and those of the Church of Rome fundamental differences—differences recognised by both to be of the gravest moment; and it is natural that the discussion of important differences in a matter so momentous as religion should create excitement. Taking advantage of the disturbed state of Protestant sentiment in consequence of the recent measures of the Legislature of Quebec, they now pretend to find great wrong to Protestantism and to the Roman Catholic laity in enactments of the Ontario Parliament, passed unanimously many years ago, viz., in 1877 and 1879. In connection with this pretence, they go about asserting that the Ontario Government is under the controlling influence of the Romish Hierarchy; that we have made a bargain with the Hierarchy for the support of themselves and their people on condition of our doing their will; and that it was through that influence that the Separate School enactments of 1877 and 1879, and the less important ones of subsequent years, were passed. Now, what ground is there for these charges? It is not religion for any Protestant to believe them if they are not true; on the contrary it is irreligion; it is not sound Protestantism; it is the reverse of sound Protestantism. Every Protestant Reformer who believes these charges is believing what is not true. He is allowing himself and his Protestant principles and sensibilities to be used by his old opponents for their party purposes, to the detriment of the country, and of the political principles which Reformers hold dear.

I understand that one reason much pressed by our opponents to make Reformers believe in our subserviency to the Church of Rome is, that they expect us to have a pretty solid Roman Catholic vote on the 5th of June. The argument is that there must be some bargain in the interest of the hierarchy, or there would not be so solid a vote of their people. I should like to believe that we are to have their solid vote, for the more votes we get the better; but as a matter of fact I hear of Conservative Roman Catholics in almost every constituency who are supporting Mr. Meredith's candidates, and I am told that in some constituencies the number is considerable. Is it not a wonder that any Roman Catholics vote for Conservative candidates in a contest in which the chief capital of the Conservative party consists in

attacks on the Roman Catholic clergy, on the Roman Catholic schools, and on the Roman Catholic religion? These attacks may naturally have led Roman Catholics to unite to a larger extent than ever before against the party which has adopted this policy; but there has been no bargain on our part for this support. So far as it comes to us, it comes from the spontaneous action of the Roman Catholic laity and clergy (so far as the clergy take an interest in it), and is the natural outcome of the hostile attacks on Roman Catholics and their institutions. If any intelligent man cannot see this, and believes, notwithstanding my denial and the absence of all other evidence, that the only and proper explanation is an anti-Protestant bargain on our part with the hierarchy, I can only wonder at him. I am afraid that to reason with him would be in vain.

AT THE ELECTIONS OF 1886

the grand proof of Roman Catholic influence was the Scripture Selections, recommended (and partly prepared) by Protestant clergymen for use in Public Schools. This supposed proof is now abandoned. Until a few months ago another proof was the exercise of the public patronage, it being asserted that Roman Catholics got an undue share. This alleged proof also has now been abandoned. The aggregate value of the offices which Roman Catholics hold, as compared with that of offices held by Protestants, is less than the proportion which the Roman Catholic population bears to the Protestant; and such additional facts as there being of the forty-three sheriffs of the Province but two Roman Catholics, and of the sixty-one registrars but six Roman Catholics, made the pretence too absurd for further use.

THE SEPARATE SCHOOL AMENDMENTS.

With respect to the enactments of 1877 and 1879, and the subsequent ones, respecting Separate Schools, the opposition are in the extraordinary position, which probably no party ever were in before, that the facts on which they have principally to rely for political capital took place, years before, with their own concurrence, and with the concurrence of all parties in the Legislature and the country, and were not objected to until years afterwards.

Again, while the enactments referred to are now relied on as proofs of our "truckling to the Roman Hierarchy," yet there is not pretended to be the slightest evidence that any of these enactments were even suggested to us by the Roman Hierarchy or Romish clergy, in case that were important. I myself do not know that any one of them originated in that way, and some of

them, I know, did not. But whoever suggested them, they were enactments of such a character that they passed the House unanimously, and *were not objected to at the time outside the House from any quarter, clerical or lay.* I have mentioned in some of my published speeches that the Hon. George Brown, the champion of Protestantism, was alive when the principal enactments now attacked were introduced, and he saw no objection to them. Rev. Dr. Ryerson, for so many years Chief Superintendent of Education, was alive also, and saw no objection. Not only was no objection seen at the time, but none occurred to anybody until the Opposition began to hunt for capital to aid in the no-Popery cry which they got up for the elections of 1886. Under these circumstances, the great body of Protestant Reformers, and of our other Protestant supporters, justly regard it as the height of absurdity to say that such enactments manifest subserviency to the Romish Hierarchy on the part of the Ontario Government.

It is alleged that the enactments of 1876 repealed the provision of law previously in force requiring a written notice on the part of a Roman Catholic ratepayer in order to the appropriation of his school tax to a Separate School. The practical importance of requiring the notice is much exaggerated, and much hypocritical indignation is expressed on account of the falsely alleged repeal. To the statement, when first made, we had the answer that, not only had we never repealed the original provision as to this notice, but that the Ontario Legislature had actually re-enacted it three times in consolidated Statutes, two of these times being after the alleged repeal. The High Court has affirmed our construction as to the continued obligation of the notice, and our Act of last session has placed the matter beyond possible doubt on the part of any intelligent man exercising his own judgment.

What does that Act say? The following are the sections which bear on this subject:—

Municipal clerk is to keep an Index of the Notices.

1. The clerk of every municipality shall forthwith after the passing of this Act enter in a convenient index book, and in alphabetical order, the name of every person who has given to him or any former clerk of the municipality notice in writing that such person is a Roman Catholic and a supporter of a Separate School in or contiguous to the municipality, as provided by the 40th section of the Separate Schools Act, or by previous Acts respecting Separate Schools; the clerk shall also enter opposite to the name, and in a column for this purpose, the date on which the notice was received, and in a third column opposite the name any notice by such person of withdrawal from supporting a Separate School, as provided by the 47th section of the said Act, or by any such other Act as aforesaid, with the

date of such withdrawal; or any disallowance of the notice by the Court of Revision or county judge, with the date of such disallowance. The index book may be in the form set out in the schedule to this Act, and shall be open to inspection by ratepayers.

Second. The clerk shall enter in the same book, and in the proper alphabetical place therein, all such notices hereafter from time to time received by the clerk.

Third. It shall be the duty of the clerk to file and carefully preserve all such notices which have been heretofore received or shall hereafter be received.

Assessor is to give distinct notice to every ratepayer whether he is assessed as a Public or a Separate School supporter.

2. In the case of a municipality in which there are supporters of a Roman Catholic Separate School therein or contiguous thereto, there shall be printed, in conspicuous characters or written across or on the assessor's notice to every ratepayer, provided for by the 47th section of the Assessment Act and set forth in schedule B to the said Act, in addition to the proper entry heretofore required to be made in the column respecting the school tax, the following words "You are assessed as a Separate School supporter," or "You are assessed as a Public School supporter," as the case may be; or these words may be added to the notice of the ratepayer set forth in the said schedule.

Assessor is to be guided by the index in ascertaining who have given the notices which entitle Roman Catholics to exemption from Public School tax.

3. Where the list required by the first section of this Act is prepared, the assessor is to be guided thereby in ascertaining who have given the notices which are by law necessary in order to entitle supporters of Roman Catholic Separate Schools to exemption from the Public School tax.

4. The statement made under the second sub-section of the 48th section of the Separate Schools Act, the 120th section of the Public Schools Act, or the 14th sub-section of the Assessment Act, means, and has always meant, a statement made to the assessor on behalf of the ratepayer or by his authority, and not otherwise.

Municipal Councils may correct taxes in cases not appealed.

5. In case of its appearing to the Municipal Council of any municipality after the final revision of the assessment roll that through some mistake or inadvertence any ratepayers have been placed in the wrong school tax column, either as supporters of Separate Schools or supporters of Public Schools, it shall be competent for the Municipal Council after due inquiry and notice to correct such errors if such Council sees fit, by directing the amount of the tax of such ratepayers to be paid to the proper school board. But it shall not be competent for the Council to reverse the decision of the Court of Revision or the County Court judge as to any ratepayer.

Second. In case of such action by a Municipal Council the ratepayer shall be liable for the same amount of school tax as if he had in the first instance been entered on the roll properly.

MR. MEREDITH'S BILL RESPECTING SEPARATE SCHOOL SUPPORTERS.

A pretence of undue influence of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy is contended to be made out by the rejection of the Opposition School Bills at the last session of the Legislature. I believe that the great body of Protestant Reformers and supporters

of the Government approve of the rejection. For the sake of any who have by misapprehensions or misrepresentations been led to take a different view, let me examine what took place. The Opposition had four bills, which the House rejected; two of of them were in charge of Mr. Meredith himself; another was in charge of Mr. French; and the fourth was in charge of Mr. Creighton. One of Mr. Meredith's bills was entitled, An Act respecting Separate School supporters. It had this recital:

Whereas every ratepayer *ought* to be by law *prima facie* a Public School supporter, and no one should be rated as a Roman Catholic Separate School supporter unless he, by his own voluntary act, declares his intention to be a supporter of Separate Schools in accordance with the provisions of the law.

And the first clause was this:—

Notwithstanding the provisions of any Act or law to the contrary, no person otherwise liable for Public School rates shall be exempt from the payment thereof, or be liable for the payment of rates in support of a Roman Catholic Separate School, unless he shall have given the notice provided for by section 40 of the Separate Schools Act.

These parts of the bill assumed, for party purposes and contrary to the fact and to the finding of the High Court, that the notice originally required needed another re-enactment and otherwise was not obligatory, that the law therefore needed amendment in order to make the notice necessary. These parts of the bill were therefore inadmissible as well as unnecessary. Another clause of the bill if adopted would have made a change, namely, the second clause, which proposed to enact as follows:—

It shall be the duty of the clerk of the municipality in preparing the collector's roll thereof to place in the column of Public School rates the rates of every ratepayer who shall not have given the said notice, so as, according to the provisions of the said section and of this Act, to entitle him to exemption from Public School rates for the year for which such collector's roll is being made up, but any error of the clerk in making up his roll shall not be conclusive on any ratepayer who shall be erroneously rated or entered therein, nor shall the assessment roll be any evidence as to whether such ratepayer is a supporter of the Public Schools or of the Roman Catholic Separate Schools.

Now observe the difference between this proposal and the law as it stands under the Government Act of the same session. Mr. Meredith's bill proposed that in order to distinguish Separate School supporters the clerk was to mark the entries on the collectors' roll without any previous inquiry by the assessor or any one, and without any previous notice to the ratepayer. No provision was made for correcting any errors, yet the clerk's entries were not to be conclusive.

Our legislation, on the other hand, requires the assessor to ascertain in the first instance who are entitled to be entered as Separate School supporters. To enable him to do so, the clerk is to keep a book containing in alphabetical order the names of all who have given the notices. Where this book is kept "the assessor is to be guided thereby in ascertaining who have given the notices which are by law necessary in order to entitle supporters of Roman Catholic Separate Schools to exemption for the Public School tax." He is then to give a written notice to every ratepayer as to whether he is assessed as a Public School or a Separate School supporter, and the ratepayer can have any error corrected by the assessor before he completes his roll and returns it to the clerk. If, notwithstanding all these precautions, there are any errors in the assessor's return to the clerk, any ratepayer may appeal to the Court of Revision, as in other cases, against the classification of either himself or any other ratepayer, before the clerk makes his entries on the collector's roll; and the clerk has the same authority as to the entries on the collector's roll for the purpose of the school tax as he has in regard to other particulars, and no more. The Act goes further to prevent errors, in providing, as already mentioned, that in case of its appearing to the Municipal Council of any municipality after the final revision of the assessment roll that through some mistake or inadvertence any ratepayers have been placed in the wrong school tax column, either as supporters of Separate Schools or supporters of Public Schools, it shall be competent for the Municipal Council after due inquiry and notice to correct such errors, if such Council sees fit, and to direct the amount of the tax of such ratepayers to be paid to the proper school board; but it shall not be competent for the Council to reverse the decision of the Court of Revision or the County Court judge as to any ratepayer.

No intelligent man, Protestant or Roman Catholic, can honestly say that this law is not immeasurably superior to the law proposed by Mr. Meredith's rejected bill "respecting Separate School supporters."

Notwithstanding all this evidence of the notice being still necessary, the Opposition, in their desperation, continue to harp on a clause in the old Act of 1879, which provided for an assessor's accepting, under certain circumstances, the fact of a man's being a Roman Catholic as prima facie evidence that he is a Separate School supporter; and, though for party purposes so much stress is now laid on the non-repeal of this clause by the Government Act, *not one of the four bills brought in by the Opposition contained a clause purporting to repeal the provision.*

The provisions I have quoted from the Government Act of last

session make the Opposition argument on the Act of 1879 absolutely ridiculous in its absurdity.

Another of the four Opposition bills was a bill by Mr. French, to deprive Separate Schools of the privilege they have of appointing a trustees to the High School Board. This privilege was given in 1885, and the reasons for it I explained in a former speech as follows:

AMENDMENT OF 1885—HIGH SCHOOL TRUSTEES.

An amendment made in 1885 respecting High Schools in certain cases is the next in order, and was also assailed in the campaign of 1886, though it had passed unanimously in the previous year after some very mild remarks by Mr. Meredith. This is another of the amendments passed in what was believed to be the interests of Protestants as well as Roman Catholics. By the amendment referred to, now constituting Section 20 of the High School Act, R.S.O., c. 226, power was given to the trustees of Separate Schools to appoint a member of the High School Board. Why was this? The Municipal Council being Protestants, they hardly ever appointed a Roman Catholic to the High School Board. Indeed, not one instance of it was known to the House when this provision was passed. The Minister of Education afterwards discovered that there were a few instances, not in all twenty (so far as known), out of the 624 High School trustees in the Province. To give the Roman Catholics a trustee on the High School Board where there were Separate Schools would be agreeable to them, and I perceived that the suggestion was a good one from a Protestant standpoint as well. Protestants pretty generally desire to encourage mixed schools of every class. We think it a good thing for the whole population that our youth of every creed should be educated together. Any measure which, without doing harm in another direction, would lead to this end, it is, from our point of view, desirable to adopt. Roman Catholics were not, as a rule, sending their children to our High Schools. These schools being under exclusively Protestant management, they looked on them as Protestant schools, and as schools which were for Roman Catholics equally objectionable with the Public Schools, and not so necessary to be made use of though they had no High Schools of their own. If our giving to the Roman Catholics the privilege of appointing a trustee to the High School Board, in localities where there are Separate Schools for the less advanced children, would tend to give them confidence in our High Schools and induce them to send their youth to them, why should we not avail ourselves of this means of attracting them

to our High Schools! To add to the High School Board another member, a Roman Catholic, chosen by Roman Catholics themselves, while it could do no harm, might, as we all thought, be of service in the very interest of these mixed schools, and therefore in the common interest of Protestants and Roman Catholics.

It has since been suggested that in such cases still another member should be added to the Board, to be chosen by the Public School trustees; but Protestants are already fully represented by the appointments of the Municipal Councils which are Protestant, and the policy of the law is to give these appointments to the Municipal Councils, and not to the Public School Boards.

Speaking of the addition of a Roman Catholic representative of Separate Schools to the High School Board, an Opposition journal has said. "We do not see that any great harm can result from this arrangement." I should think not. No harm at all can result. On the contrary, good; and good, it is to be hoped, alike to Roman Catholics and to Protestants. The wisdom of the amendment has since been indicated by the fact that there has been a large increase in the number of Roman Catholic pupils attending the High Schools.

QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

Another Opposition bill, which the House rejected in the session of 1890, was the bill of which Mr. Creighton had charge and which contained this provision:

"Section 61 of the Separate School Act is hereby repealed, and the following substituted therefor:

"'The teachers of a Separate School under this act shall be subject to the same examinations, and receive their certificates of qualification in the same manner, as Public School teachers generally.'"

That is the law now, with one exception; the new clause being the same verbatim with the first part of the enactment which the bill proposed to repeal, but omitting the second part of the existing enactment, which is this:

"All the persons qualified by law as teachers, either in the Province of Ontario, or, *at the time of the passing of the British North America Act, in the Province of Quebec*, shall be considered qualified teachers for the purpose of this Act."

The reason for this part of the existing enactment was that the Legislature is considered to have no jurisdiction to exclude as teachers the classes of persons named in this proviso. The

Upper Canada law in force at the passing of the B. N. A. Act provided that "persons qualified by law as teachers in Upper *or Lower Canada* shall be considered qualified teachers for the purposes of this Act," viz., of the Separate School Act of 1863 (26 Vic., chap. 5, sec. 13), and the B. N. A. Act limited the powers of the Provincial Legislatures with respect to education laws by this restriction:

"Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the Province at the Union."

Thus, supporters of Separate Schools had the right to employ as teachers persons qualified according to Quebec law as it then stood, and persons so qualified had a right to receive such appointments if Separate School trustees chose to make them. Mr. Crooks, when Minister of Education, held, I believe, that the privilege referred to certain teaching orders in the Church of Rome, and to them only. The advantage to Separate Schools of employing these teachers was, that many of the schools are poor, and that such teachers, being unmarried, could be obtained at much lower salaries than others, while some of them were as fully qualified as those who have certificates of qualification as Public School teachers. They were excepted from the general law as to examination of teachers, on the ground that the Legislature had under the British North America Act no jurisdiction to exclude them. I observe that Mr. Armour, one of the Conservative Equal Rights candidate for Toronto, a legal gentleman of ability, is said to take the same view of the Act.

TEXT BOOKS.

The Opposition had no bill with respect to the text books to be used in Separate Schools, but they moved a resolution on the subject, and the Opposition journals and Opposition speakers make many false statements as to the position of the Government with respect to this resolution and to the subject of it. Professional advisers of Separate School Boards have advised them that the choice of all text books by these schools is incident to the right of having Separate Schools. That this is so as to books used to convey religious instruction is admitted on all hands, and the question of legal right is as to other text books. Now, there are no better text books than those in use in the Public Schools, and none cheaper. Indeed, none at once so good and so cheap can be got. There is, therefore, no reason why the trustees of Separate Schools should not, as a matter of

choice, adopt them; and our text books have accordingly been adopted in a large number of the Separate Schools, and are gradually being introduced into all. If we were contemplating immediate compulsory regulations on the subject, the trustees should of course have an opportunity of first having the right determined by the Courts. There being the difference of professional opinion on the subject, and the question not having yet been before the Courts, the Government does not see any sufficient reason of at present assuming a compulsory attitude; and we hope and expect that by the voluntary adoption of the Public School books in all the Separate Schools the occasion for litigation and compulsion will be avoided. The school law has always been administered in that spirit, as well under Dr. Ryerson as since, and it is the true spirit.

THE BALLOT FOR SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

I have now explained three of the Opposition Bills and why they were rejected. The remaining Bill of the four is Mr. Meredith's Bill respecting the Ballot for Public and Separate Schools.

A great effort is made to disturb Protestant sensibilities by referring to and misrepresenting the position of the Government and their supporters with respect to this bill. What was the proposal submitted by the Opposition Bill? It proposed to make the ballot compulsory on both Separate and Public Schools in every city, town, and incorporated village, and in every township in which there is a township board. By the present law the adoption of the ballot for Public Schools is optional, and not one-half of the school boards have adopted the ballot, the people in more than half the localities preferring the open vote for school trustees. I saw no sufficient reason why the ballot should be imposed against their will on three-fifths of the Public Schools having this option. When Mr. Meredith wanted to make the ballot compulsory as regards Separate Schools, he saw the difficulty of making it compulsory in their case and leaving an option as now in the case of Public Schools. He would therefore change the system preferred by the majority for the Public Schools, in order to force the ballot on Separate Schools. That was the proposal which the Opposition made, and which we did not see our way to accepting. The compulsion of the Public Schools against their will was too heavy a price to pay for the compulsion of the Separate Schools, and this we regarded as of itself a conclusive objection to Mr. Meredith's bill. No alternative was submitted by the Opposition.

Several other considerations intensified the objection to this interference with the Public Schools against the will of

their supporters. It was plain that the mass of the Roman Catholic laity of the Province were not prepared for the application of the ballot to tl eir Separate Schools, and did not want it. There is beyond all doubt no antagonism, but on the contrary, the utmost respect, confidence and affection, on the part of the great body of the Roman Catholic laity of this Province towards their clergy; and it would be blindness not to see that the great mass of their people do not regard themselves as needing Protestant protection against their priests, and look on such a suggestion on the part of Protestants as an impertinence and an insult. Some Roman Catholics desire the ballot; these are comparatively few yet, are mostly confined to Toronto, and, for all I know, desire the ballot for the same reasons as Protestant ratepayers desire it in the localities in which it has been adopted for Public Schools, and not for protection against the clergy. Of those Roman Catholics who want the ballot, none had been asking us for it. The Separate Schools are for Roman Catholics themselves to manage, and if at present they so generally prefer the present system of voting that none are asking us for a change, it did not seem a defensible thing for us as Protestants to be in a hurry to make the change.

As a Government we are in favour of the ballot system. We got it adopted for legislative elections, then for municipal elections, and then for Public School elections wherever the Board of Trustees of a locality chose. Mr. Meredith and other Conservative leaders were against the ballot at first, though now they a:e clamorous that it should be compulsory on Public Schools against the wishes of the majority of the ratepayers, and compulsory on Separate Schools though in but one locality have even a minority of Roman Catholic ratepayers expressed desire for it. I think that time will bring about the ballot with the general consent and approval of all, for both Public and Separate Schools, as it has for Parliamentary and municipal electoins; but the attempt to impose it on Separate Schools in connection with a Protestant agitation for repealing all Separate School legislation, and even abolishing Roman Catholic Separate Schools, may delay any movement in favor of the ballot among the Roman Catholic people or clergy. This result I should regret, and the unprincipled party tactics of our opponents are responsible for it. If any considerable number of Roman Catholics had asked or should ask for the ballot, and the change were admitted or decided to be within our jurisdiction (which Roman Catholic lawyers dispute), a Protestant Legislature would not be disposed to refuse the necessary legislation. If a case were established of the Roman Catholic ratepayers *needing* the ballot as a protection against undue clerical interference, and the change appeared to be within our Legis-

lative jurisdiction, the change would probably be made, though the number asking for it should be small. But the case dealt with last session was a proposal by the authors of an anti-Roman Catholic agitation to interfere with institutions belonging to Roman Catholics, against the will of practically the whole body of the Roman Catholic people, unasked by any of those to be affected by the change.

The objection to the proposal to make the ballot compulsory on Public and Separate Schools, against the opinion of the majority in the case of Public Schools, and against the almost unanimous desire in the case of Separate Schools, was further enhanced by the small amount of possible or probable result to be anticipated from the compulsion. As regards the Public Schools that do not want the ballot, and have not adopted it, no good is expected or pretended from the compulsory change: the several localities which have decided not to adopt the ballot are the best judges as to whether the ballot would do good in their localities. As regards Separate Schools, there are but 239 of them in the Province; there were contests in but seven of these at the last Separate School elections; and there is not the slightest reason for assuming that as respects any of the other Separate Schools, where there was no contest, there was any difference of opinion as to who should be the trustees. Mr. Meredith would require a ballot for 239 Separate Schools, while, so far as we know, there are but seven of these that need any voting at all, open or secret, in the choice of trustees. Further, it does not appear that in more than one of these seven elections there was any antagonism between the clergy and any section of the voters, as to the trustees to be elected; so far as known, the voting in the other six was in consequence of the same kind of differences as leads to voting in the case of Public Schools. The case may by excitable Protestants be assumed to be otherwise; but Protestants, who would be just, cannot make any such assumption without evidence. We cannot assume without evidence that antagonisms exist between the Roman Catholic clergy and their flocks.

Again, what on the whole is the practical use which this compulsory measure, if adopted, might accomplish? Really nothing more than the chance that with the ballot the Separate School ratepayers may in one or more of perhaps seven localities elect trustees unacceptable to the clergyman, and the chance that if they do these trustees would manage the school better than the trustees desired by the clergyman. There may be a chance of all this occurring, but it is not a very probable thing, considering the cordial relations which exist between the Roman Catholic clergy and the great mass of the Roman Catholic laity,

and considering the dogmas of the church to which they choose to belong, with respect to educational matters. Is the chance referred to of such importance that any Protestant Reformers should overlook the merits of the Reform party and Reform Goverment in all other respects, because that Government did not see its way clear to impose the ballot last session? Is this chance of sufficient importance to justify imposing the ballot at the same time on Public Schools that do not want it? The importance of the chance, as compared with other public matters, has been enormously exaggerated, and I cannot imagine any Protestant Reformer being deluded by it when he understands the facts. All the Roman Catholic members of the House, except one, were against the bill, though several of them, and perhaps all, are in favor of the adoption of the ballot by-and-bye. The one Roman Catholic member who took a different view is certainly no representative of Roman Catholic sentiment in the matter.

It was under all these circumstances that the House rejected Mr. Meredith's ballot bill; and the great body of the Protestant Reformers and Protestant supporters of the Government sustain the action of the Government in the matter. I hope that all, without exception, will be reasonable enough to take the same view on the 5th of June.

I may mention here the well-known fact that those Roman Catholics in Toronto who desire the ballot are at this moment amongst the strongest supporters of the Government, and of the Government candidates there, notwithstanding that the ballot was not imposed on Separate Schools last session. Why any Protestant Reformers should be expected to oppose a Reform Government because of the ballot not having been so imposed, when the strongest Roman Catholic friends of the ballot do not on that account oppose the Government, is a mystery to me. I should think such Reformers when they know the facts must be preciously few.

ABOLITION OF SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

The position which we have taken on the question of abolishing Separate Schools is referred to as another evidence of the undue influence with us of the Roman Hierarchy. It is strange that any one should make this a ground for weakening the present Government or strengthening Mr. Meredith and his associates, when that gentleman does not himself go for the abolition of Separate Schools. This is what he has said on the subject in his address to the electors of the City of London, dated Nov. 25, 1886 (*Mail 28th*):—

"The maintenance of the Separate School system of the Province is guaranteed to our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens under the Constitution." * * * * It is "the duty of the Government honestly to administer it and to make it as efficient as possible, to the end that it may properly perform the functions for which it was designed." In his speech at London, on the 16th December last, as reported in the *Empire* on the 17th he said:—"We have implanted in our Constitution the decree that there shall be Separate Schools; and that decree prescribes that they shall exist on a basis upon which they existed at the time of Confederation. We cannot alter that if we would." I believe that Mr. Meredith has spoken to the same effect on several occasions.

My own position with regard to Separate Schools is this: It is a duty to do all the practical good one can with the means at command. For a public man to take up an impracticable thing, or a thing not practicable at the time, may be to deprive him of the ability to be useful for other good things which are practicable. Now, being a Protestant, I do not pretend to be, or to have ever been, in favor of the Separate Schools, but they have been guaranteed to the Roman Catholics by the British North America Act at the instance of both Ontario and Quebec. That fact has changed essentially our position now, as compared with our position before Confederation.

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

There is no power now in either the Provincial Legislature or the Dominion Parliament to abolish these Separate Schools; that can only be done by the Imperial Parliament. This is so clea that no one disputes it. It is said, however, that the provisions of the B. N. A. Act may be changed where objectionable; that the Imperial Parliament has made some changes already; and that I was party to a proposal at Quebec in 1887 for further changes. No doubt changes in the B. N. A. Act may be made, and may properly be made. No doubt the Imperial Parliament would without difficulty make almost any change which the people of the Dominion desired and had no difference of opinion about. That was the character of the only changes which have been hitherto made. As for the changes proposed at Quebec in 1887, these were so proposed at a

CONVENTION OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS,

were agreed to by all that were represented at the Convention, and were afterwards approved of by their respective Legislatures.

The Dominion Government had been asked to send representatives to this Convention; the two unrepresented Provinces, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island (the smallest in population of the Provinces of the Dominion) were also invited; but neither the Dominion Government nor either of these two Provinces sent representatives; and their Parliament and Legislatures have not hitherto intimated concurrence in the changes proposed. On that account, the five Provinces that favored the changes have not yet applied to the Imperial Parliament. We knew that the Imperial Parliament would not make the changes desired without the concurrence of the Dominion Parliament, as well as the principal Provincial Legislatures. Possibly, in view of the nature of the changes desired, the non-concurrence of British Columbia and Prince Edward Island might not alone have been deemed a fatal difficulty, since the changes proposed had the approval of both the Conservatives and the Reformers in the Governments represented at the Convention; they were in the common interest of all the Provinces, and of the Dominion as a whole, and did not relate to any matter of religion, education, or race, and therefore to no matter of compromise bearing on these matters. The occasion for them was expressed in the preamble of the Resolutions:—

"That twenty years practical working of the B. N. A. Act has developed much friction between the Federal and Provincial Governments and Legislatures, has disclosed grave omissions in the provisions of the Act, and has shown (when the language of the Act came to be judicially interpreted) that in many respects what was the common understanding and intention had not been expressed, and that important provisions in the Act are obscure as to their true intent and meaning."

The changes contemplated by the Convention were thus such changes as the Dominion Parliament and the Legislatures of all the Provinces were expected to approve of, if not immediately, yet before long, and as I have no doubt they will by-and-by approve of in substance, and will unite in requesting the Imperial Parliament to enact, unless the people should come meanwhile to desire and ask for changes of more extensive character.

CONFEDERATION COMPROMISE.

The difficulty of inducing the Imperial Parliament to abrogate the provisions of the B. N. A. Act guaranteeing Separate Schools is, not that the Act is a sacred thing which cannot be altered—no one pretends anything so absurd—but that the provisions in it as to Separate Schools had been inserted in the Act at the instance of the elected representatives of both Upper and Lower Canada,

and of the Protestant and Roman Catholic populations of each; that one of the principal difficulties in working the former Constitutional Act had arisen from differences about the Separate Schools; that the provisions in question had been introduced into the new Act as the deliberate compromise of these differences; and that without these Separate School provisions we should have had no Confederation, no Dominion Parliament, no Provincial Legislature.

It has been said that the Separate School Act of 1863 was never assented to by the people of Ontario. It certainly was not so assented to at the time of the passing of the Act. On the contrary, the Act, though it had the support of Dr. Ryerson, was strenuously resisted by Mr. Brown in *The Globe* and otherwise, and by, I think, a majority of the members representing Upper Canada constituencies. No man was or is more against Separate Schools, or more against the Act of 1863, than Mr. Brown and his political associates were; no man was more vigorous or persevering in his attempt to get rid of Separate Schools, and have all children taught together in the Public Schools, than he was; but all his efforts had failed. In his opposition to them he was largely supported in Ontario, more largely than any who are agitating the subject now are likely ever to be. He got no support from the Protestant population of Quebec; and in the Constitutional negotiations of 1864 he felt, as the other opponents of Separate Schools did, that a new Constitution which, while leaving those schools in possession of the privileges which they then had, should (subject to these) place any further legislation in the hands of the Protestant majority of Ontario, would be a boon to the Province, and was (from a Protestant standpoint) the best thing practicable then, or likely to be practicable in the future. Mr. Brown, therefore, with the concurrence of his Protestant friends in the Legislature, and of the people generally in the country, accepted that compromise.

At the time of the agitation under Mr. Brown, the Separate Schools were thought to be a constant menace to the Public Schools, as laws were constantly passed by the Canadian Parliament over the heads of an Upper Canadian majority. The Protestants of Upper Canada were more than content to acquiesce in the Separate Schools as they existed if further legislation in their favour were made to depend upon the will of the Protestant population of the Provinces.

By the 43rd of the resolutions afterwards passed by the delegates of all the Provinces at the Convention of October, 1864, it was provided that the Provincial Legislatures should have jurisdiction to make laws with respect to education, but with this

exception :—" Saving the rights and privileges which the Protestant or Catholic minority in both Canadas may possess as to their denominationl schools at the time when the Union goes into operation." The resolutions were afterwards approved by large majorities in the Legislative Council and Assembly of Canada; and the provisions in the B. N. A. Act on the subject were designed to carry out the resolutions adopted by the delegates and approved by the Canadian Legislature.

Thus, though the Separate School Act of 1863 had not the approval of the people of Upper Canada at the time of its passing, yet it is a matter of history that the B. N. A. Act, including the limitary clauses as to denominational schools, was at the time and afterwards satisfactory to all Ontario, including the strongest Protestants of both political parties, and those of no political party. I cannot conceal from myself, therefore, that if, as has been said, the Province is " by fetters compelled to maintain and perpetuate a dual system of schools," the Province itself had asked those " fetters " to be put on; that if Ontario or Quebec has less liberty in dealing with the subject than the other Provinces have, it is because Ontario and Quebec, for reasons thought by all to be satisfactory, chose to have their liberty curtailed in this respect in order to secure the other advantages which the British North America Act afforded; and that if the limitary clauses of the Act are an injustice to the Province, the Province itself was the author of the injustice.

Personally, I should be glad if the children of Protestants and Roman Catholics were educated together in all the Public Schools of the Province, as they are in its colleges and High Schools, and in most of the Public Schools; but I am not prepared, any more than Mr. Meredith is, to join in useless efforts for the abolition of Separate Schools. It is to be remembered also, that the Protestant population of Catholic Quebec are as anxious to retain the Dissentient Schools, as the Roman Catholics of Protestant Ontario are to retain their Separate Schools, and would object as strongly to the repeal as the Roman Catholics would. The Legislature of Quebec would oppose the repeal as to either class of schools, and the Roman Catholic population of the Dominion would concur zealously in that opposition.

I may observe here that there are far more Protestant Dissentient or Separate Schools in Roman Catholic Quebec than of Roman Catholic schools in Protestant Ontario. The number of Protestant Dissentient schools in Quebec last year was about 1,000, according to the statement of the Rev. Mr. Rexford, the Protestant Secretary of the Department of Public Instruction in Quebec; while the number of Roman Catholic Separate Schools in Ontario

is only 239. The Protestants of Quebec have never supposed that their schools would be safe in Quebec if the Roman Catholic Separate Schools in Ontario were to be by Act of Parliament abolished. It is also to be remembered that to Protestant statesmen in England it would give no shock to find Roman Catholic Separate Schools recognized in this country. A public statement lately made by the Hon. R. W. Scott shows that there are at this moment 910 Roman Catholic Schools in England receiving State aid, to the amount of $800,000.

Further: Many amongst ourselves think that it would not be just or right for Ontario to *ask* for the repeal; that, having by means of the compromise got a settlement of our constitutional difficulties which was satisfactory to the Province, and having been for 23 years in possession of the fruits of the compromise, and meaning to retain those fruits, it would not be just to take back the price, or part of the price, by means of which those advantages had been obtained; and that, if the Protestants of Ontario, through their dislike to Separate Schools, should not see the injustice, the Imperial Parliament, viewing the matter from outside, would certainly regard the repeal as unjust, and would refuse to be a party to the injustice.

In view of these considerations, as a student of politics and politicians in a somewhat long public life, I am perfectly certain that, under the undisputed and indisputable circumstances, no British ministry would propose or sanction the repeal of the provisions in question against the will of some of the parties to the compromise, or of those now representing these parties. I regret, therefore, an agitation for the abolition of Separate Schools which, so far as abolition is concerned, will certainly be futile as long as Quebec is Catholic, and as the population of the Dominion is considerably more than one-third Catholic, and as long as the Protestants of Quebec object to the abolition of the dissentient schools of Quebec.

But though it is quite certain that the Imperial Parliament would not feel at liberty to repeal the clauses of the B. N. A. Act which guarantee to the Roman Catholics of Ontario their Separate Schools and the privileges which these schools possessed at the time of the Union, the agitation may be used, and is being used, by [illegible] political party, for the party purpose of getting [illegible] they cannot otherwise get of some Protestant Reformers [illegible] here who are not aware of the futility of the proposal for abolition, or do not fully appreciate the situation in that respect. Intelligent Reformers when they understand the facts will not permit themselves to be used for this purpose.

POSITION OF THE EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION.

Dr. Caven, like some other upright members of the Equal Rights Association, does not like to think that Separate Schools may not be abolished, but he and they see the impropriety of allowing the question to influence votes at the present election. Dr. Caven has said: "Till public opinion declares itself with sufficient author- "ity it were unreasonable to expect that any Government should "stake its existence on definite action in relation to this matter." So, in the recent address of the Equal Rights Association, it is admitted that any movement in the direction of abolition "should "be preceded by a deep-seated conviction that the continuance "of the system is fraught with consequences perilous to the "welfare of the country." How far does such deep-seated conviction prevail? Mr. Meredith and those for whom he speaks have not reached that deep-seated conviction, as he has declared (*vide* London speech, 16th December, 1889) his readiness "to afford every facility for the purpose of improving these Separate Schools in their *machinery*, their *working* and in their *development*."

It is said that the recent address of the council of the Equal Rights Association of Toronto has made some of our Protestant friends for the time cool towards a Government of which otherwise they approve, or has even for a time made them hostile to it.

Now it has been stated by Mr. Charlton, and has not been disputed, that the meeting of the council at which the Address was adopted was called without any consultation with the President, and without his authority; that the resolutions afterwards embodied in the Address were prepared without his knowledge; that neither Dr. Caven nor Mr. Charlton, who is one of the most prominent members of the Association, was permitted to see the resolutions until they were produced at the Council for adoption; that they were adopted by a majority after a "desultory discussion and rapid consideration," and without "that degree of consideration necessary to a thorough comprehension of their purport and character;" and that Mr. Charlton refused to have his name signed to them. Dr. Caven allowed his name to be signed; but from the construction afterwards placed on the address by Opposition politicians and public journals, and from the use made of his name for partisan purposes, he published a letter stating what his personal views are. The following are some extracts from this letter:—

"The document issued by the Equal Rights Association is not intended to be, as in my judgment it is not capable of being fairly, used against one party rather than another. I must repeat what I said in a letter which you were

good enough to publish on the 30th of April, that all attempts to make party capital out of the Separate School question are either ignorant or dishonest, and will be discountenanced by every fair-minded man who knows a little of Canadian history. It were a shameless thing for either party to make the other responsible for extending the privileges of Separate Schools, and almost equally shameless for the community or any considerable section of it to lay the responsibility exclusively upon our legislators. What has been done, whether for good or evil, was done with but little criticism or remonstrance.

"Questions relating to Separate Schools have now been raised, and for my own part I am so anxious to have these considered on their merits, that I must regard as an enemy to our cause the man who would prejudice the discussion by making it subserve party interests. Conscientiously representing principles which they believe to be important, Equal Rights men will, I am sure, be faithful to them and look straight forward, seeking rather to gain the adhesion to our cause of all who love equity and freedom than to take ground which would necessarily ensure, for a time at least, the antagonism of one or other of the political parties. * * * *I desire therefore to say (I speak for myself) that the measures adopted in regard to French schools appear* to be satisfactory, as does the legislation of last session respecting Separate School supporters. Whether the entire provisions of the statute on this latter subject are in the best shape is a point on which I am hardly qualified to offer an opinion.

"With the exception of what is said regarding the *abolition of Separate Schools*, there is nothing in the recent address which is not contained, explicitly or implicitly, in the resolutions adopted by the Convention in June last. This larger question, I humbly think, should be earnestly considered by our people, and is not prematurely brought forward; but *till public opinion declares itself with sufficient authority it were unreasonable to expect that any Government should stake its existence on definite action in relation to it.*'

(The italics in this and other quotations are, of course, mine.)

Some months before the last session of the Ontario Legislature Dr. Caven in a public letter to a Lindsay paper had given this answer to a statement that he was opposed to the Ontario Government and to myself as first minister:—"The inference that my connection with the Citizens' Committee implies opposition to Mr. Mowat is entirely gratuitous. I claim the liberty to speak freely on the whole subject of ultramontane aggressiveness wherever it reveals itself, but I have never stated, nor has anything done by me afforded just ground for the conclusion that I wished to see Mr. Mowat superseded." The reverend doctor further said that to hold me responsible for the Jesuit Estates Act seemed to him "quite singular."

After the recent session of the Ontario Legislature, and at a public meeting in Ottawa on the 15th April, Dr. Caven said:—"He had no fault to find with the legislation of the session."

Mr. Charlton at the same meeting said, "He thought that Dominion politics was the field of the Equal Rights Association." He added:—"Whatever legislation had been passed by the Ontario Government had been in the direction of progress. If the Roman

Catholics did not want the ballot it should not be forced on them. As a Protestant Liberal he had no hesitation in saying Mr. Mowat had his confidence so far as he had gone. Mr. Meredith would be allied with the very party they were now fighting in Dominion politics. He would vote for Mr. Mowat. He deprecated the attempts to unfairly prejudice the public mind against Mr. Mowat." Mr. Charlton has since published letters and made speeches protesting against the principles of the Equal Rights Association being made to do duty against the Ontario Government.

It was the proceedings of the Dominion Government and Parliament which gave rise to the Equal Rights Association, not any proceedings of the Ontario Government or Legislature.

Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Barron, two other Reform members of the House of Commons who were in the minority of 13 that voted for the disallowance of the Jesuit Estates Act, have spoken to the same effect as Mr. Charlton. In fact, all the Reformers who were in that minority have testified that their action implied no complaint against or dissatisfaction with the Ontario Government, and they are giving to us their hearty support.

MR. MC'CARTHY AND MR. RYKERT.

Mr. McCarthy, the principal author of the Address, is making speeches in different parts of the Province to induce Reformers and others to vote against Reform candidates. Now, Mr. Rykert was a prominent speaker against Mr. O'Brien's motion for the disallowance of the Jesuit Estates Act, and, besides, was so objectionable a man that his conduct in certain grave matters was unanimously declared by the House of Commons to have been "dishonorable, corrupt and scandalous;" yet Mr. McCarthy made no speech against him in the recent election in Lincoln. Mr. McCarthy wants Protestant Reformers to reject all candidates who support the Ontario Government, though that Government had nothing to do with the Jesuit Estates Act, nor with Mr O'Brien's motion to disallow it, nor with the Separate Schools in the Northwest; but Mr. McCarthy is quite willing that the Conservative Mr. Rykert should be re-elected, notwithstanding his position on these subjects and all his misdeeds. That single fact demonstrates that Mr. McCarthy's course in endeavoring to promote the rejection of the Reform candidates for the Ontario Legislature is dictated by political and not religious motives. Most Reformers see this perfectly, and refuse to be used for this purpose. It ought before the 5th of June to be equally clear to all.

Protestant Reformers should, in view of the facts, regard the Address of the Equal Rights Association as the Address of the

Conservative Mr. McCarthy and the other Conservatives of the Association, *and of no others.*

The Address contains many statements which, in the sense in which they are read by Conservative journalists, Dr. Caven felt it his duty to repudiate. Other things in it I have observed upon in other connections. A few things I may remark on here. The Address speaks of the line between civil and ecclesiastical authority requiring to be defined. This suggestion, I presume, when affirmed originally by the Equal Rights Association, referred to the Jesuit Estates Act; but that Act is not mentioned in the present Address, and the observation as it appears in this document was intended by its author to be read by the general public as referring to Provincial affairs. No Provincial legislation could make the line between civil and ecclesiastical more clear than it now is; provincial statutes give no authority to the hierarchy, and need no amendment that I know of in that respect.

We agree with the Address that the State "cannot without abnegating its just authority ask or accept permission from any ecclesiastical persons or organizations or from any extraneous body whatever, to exercise its own functions and perform its own duties." Every member of the Ontario Government subscribes to that doctrine, and our practice has been in accordance with it. The State has full control over all temporal matters which are within Provincial jurisdiction, and no action now is needed to give the State such full control. It has control already, and as perfectly as any legislative or other Provincial action could make it.

We agree with the Address that English should, as far as possible, be the language of instruction in the Public Schools of the Province. We have made regulations for that object, and are doing, and will continue to do, all that can be done to secure it "as speedily as possible."

We agree with the Address that every teacher in a Public School should be able to use the English language efficiently in imparting instruction, and we are taking the best practicable means for accomplishing that object.

We agree also that the text books used in the Separate Schools should be those authorized by the Department of Education, except any which the rights possessed by Separate Schools under the B. N. A. Act, entitle their trustees to use without the authority of the Educational Department. I have already mentioned that, as a matter of fact, the authorized text books are now largely used in the Separate Schools; and I have confidence that, under the prudent management of the Educational Department, their use will speedily be universal without the necessity of resorting to the Courts to decide any question of jurisdiction.

The Address goes for the abolition of Separate Schools; admits that their abolition is beyond the power of the Provincial Legislature; but asserts that a "motion for the repeal of the limitary clause must by constitutional usage originate in the Provincial Legislature." I presume this was stated by the Council of the Association in reliance on the constitutional opinion and assurance of Mr. MacCarthy; but the statement is quite incorrect. There is no such "constitutional usage," and in fact there is no "usage" of any kind on the subject. The amendments which, at the request of the Dominion Government, have been made by the Imperial Parliament, were so made with out any motion in the Dominion Parliament or any Provincial Legislature.

The concluding paragraph of the Address is this:—"Candidates in the field should be approached by our friends in the constituencies, and he who—*other things being equal*—is found to be most in accordance with our principles should receive their hearty and undivided support." Intelligent Reformers know that, as between a candidate who is a supporter of the present Government and a candidate who favors the Opposition, other things are *not* "equal;" and neither the Rev. Principal, nor any Reformer in the Council, meant to say that this difference was to be disregarded. It is only where "other things are equal" that the Address undertakes to advise electors to vote for the candidate most in accordance with the principles set forth in the Address. Some of its statements, here called principles, have no application to Provincial issues; others are erroneous and misleading; and there is nothing in the Address of a practical kind, and proper and desirable for the Provincial Government and Legislature to adopt, which the Ontario Government and Legislature have not adopted already, and are not now carrying out.

CONSERVATIVE MISREPRESENTATIONS.

Mostof the misrepresentations made by our opponents to advance the religious cry are collected and adopted in a printed Conservative document used in the interest of the Conservative candidate in one of the electoral divisions, and probably elsewhere also. As a matter of convenience I shall use this document for the purpose of giving you a summary of the numerous misrepresentations made in Conservative newspapers and by Conservative orators, some only of which I have already mentioned. Most of the statements in this document relate wholly to the subject which I have been discussing. A few relate to other subjects, and are equally false, but with these I am not dealing here. In this document it is stated that:

"1. Mowat maintains union of Church and State.

"2. Mowat maintains that French shall be the school language of those who desire it.

"3. Mowat maintains that Separate Schools may and do use French, Yankee and other disloyal text books as the priests direct."

All these statements are untrue. I maintain no such things.

"4. Mowat maintains that the priests may control the schools for the church. The Romish church not the Roman Catholic people shall be supreme."

I have never said one word to give the shadow of an excuse for this misstatement. On the contrary, I have pointed out that as far as the law is concerned, the control is with the ratepayers exclusively.

"5. Mowat maintains that old Romish standards used in Quebec before Confederation shall be legal in Roman Catholic Separate Schools in Ontario."

I maintain no such thing.

"6. Mowat maintains that, willing or not willing, Roman Catholic citizens shall be rated as Separate School supporters at the direction of the priest or other person."

I have over and over again maintained the very reverse. I have maintained, ever since the question was first broached, that without giving the required notice no Roman Catholic ratepayer can legally or properly be rated as a Separate School supporter either "at the direction of the priest or without any such direction;" that the law requiring a written notice by the Roman Catholic ratepayer has never been repealed; that, on the contrary, we actually re-enacted it in the consolidations of 1877, 1883 and 1886. The High Court has since decided that I was right; and our Act of last session provided new machinery to ensure the law being carried out.

"(7) Mowat maintains that the Romish Church shall have a special trustee on High School Boards, who shall be appointed, not by the people, but by Rome."

This is false, like all the other statements. A Roman Catholic trustee is only appointed on the High School Board in places where there is a Separate School, and he is appointed by the trustees of such Separate School, who are elected by the people. The trustee is thus by law appointed by the people. The law gives no authority to "Rome" or the "Romish Church." Rome or the Romish Church has nothing to do with the appointment, except as the people who belong to that church may choose, in

the exercise of their legal rights, to defer to the opinion or wish of those who to them represent their Church.

"(8) Mowat maintainsthat Romish school trustees shall be elected by open vote, so that the priests may control the elections."

It is not true that I desire the priests to "control the elections." The "open vote" has been the only mode of election for the half century that there have been Separate School trustees; the mass of the Roman Catholics are not yet prepared for, and do not yet desire, a different mode, and no Roman Catholics have been asking us for a different mode, or have been saying to us that a new mode is needed for their protection. The matter concerns Roman Catholics and not Protestants, and what I have said is, that the propose change should not under these circumstances be hastily imposed on Roman Catholics by Protestants.

"(9) Mowat maintains that Romish convents and nunneries may draw Government support, while Protestant ladies' schools and colleges may not."

I maintain no such thing.

"(10) Mowat maintains that Roman Catholics may at their will or their priests' will change from supporting one school to another."

A Roman Catholic who has been supporting the Public School may, by giving the proper written notice, change to the support of the Separate School of the locality. But this has been so for nearly half a century; it is a right which is now guaranteed by the Constitution; and is a right which all admit that the Provincial Legislature has no power to take away.

"(11) Mowat maintains that only the Romish Church authorities can repeal Separate School laws, viz., their consent must be obtained before repeal."

Neither Mowat nor anyone else maintains any such nonsense. On the contrary, instead of the "Romish Church authorities" having the sole power to repeal Separate School laws, they have no power at all to repeal one particle of any Separate School law, and they do not pretend to have. The document says: "Their consent must be obtained before repeal." No one maintains any such thing. Whatever in the Separate School laws the Provincial Legislation has the power of repealing, they require no consent of the Romish authorities or anyone else before repealing; and whatever can only be repealed by the Imperial Parliament, that body may repeal without the consent of the Romish authorites or any other. All this is too clear to need being "maintained" by anyone, and the contrary is maintained by nobody.

"(12) Mowat maintains that the people's representatives in Parliament, or out of it, may not say what shall be the nature of the religious instruction given in Separate Schools; the Romish priesthood alone decides that, even the Roman Catholic ratepayers have no say."

Everybody knows, that the very purpose of Separate or denominational Schools is to enable their supporters to determine "the nature of the religious instruction" given to them. But it is not true that "the Roman Catholic ratepayers have no say." On the contrary, so far as the law is concerned, the Roman Catholic ratepayers and the trustees whom they elect, have *everything* to say on the subject. The only authority of the priesthood is the authority which the Roman Catholic people choose, as a matter of duty or just deference, that they should have. On this subject the church has doctrines, and as members of the church, the people (I presume) accept those doctrines, but without one single Legislative enactment requiring them to do so.

"(13) Mowat maintains that Separate Schools shall be perpetuated."

On the contrary, I should be glad to see Roman Catholics attending the Public Schools and abandoning Separate Schools. Their abolition is not for us a question of practical politics.

"(17) Mowat maintains Government shall be on the basis of pandering to the Romish Church Hierarchy—who hitherto have held the balance of power."

I maintain no such thing. The Ontario Government is not and never was, and never will be "on the basis of pandering to the Romish Church Hierarchy;" the hierarchy, have not "hitherto held the balance of power;" and so far as I know, they have not pretended or claimed to do so in this Province.

"20. Mowat maintains that in elections to the Legislative Assembly the ballot shall be numbered, and for Roman Catholic Separate School trustee elections voting shall be open. This enables the Government and the Romish hierarchy to trace and control the votes of liquor sellers and Roman Catholic electors."

The Ontario Ballot Law, which requires the ballot to be numbered at elections to the Legislature, is taken in that respect from the Ballot Act of England, Ireland and Scotland, where the system has been in force ever since 1872, and with the approval of all parties. It had its origin in the Australasian colony of Victoria, and is the same as the Ballot Acts of some of the most important Australasian colonies: Victoria, New Zealand, Queensland and Western Australia. No ballot system is perfectly secret, but this system is practically as secret as the ballot system of

the Dominion, which the opposition pretend to desire to substitute; and incomparably more secret than the United States, system. It does *not* "enable the Government and the Romish hierarchy to trace and control the votes of any class." It was adopted without any thought of "liquor sellers and Roman Catholic electors." The numbering of the ballots, as provided in the Imperial and Colonial Acts mentioned, and adopted with the concurrence of both sides of the House in the Ontario Act which followed them, has for its object to prevent the stuffing of the ballot box with false votes which can not otherwise be separated from the good votes. No access to the ballots is permitted except under the orders of the Courts, and then only to the extent necessary for tracing and withdrawing ballots not put in by electors entitled to vote. The system is in advance of the Dominion system, and practically quite as secret as regards all genuine votes of electors.

The whole crusade of the Opposition would amount to nothing but for their many misrepresentations, I hope that all our people will see in time what the truth really is, and that none of our old friends will be found on the 5th of June voting against the candidates who support the Government. I am sure that the Reformers of North Oxford unanimously unite with me in this hope. If we lose some Reform votes which we should receive, their places will, I believe, be more than supplied by new votes, from all classes and creeds, which are to be given to our candidates; but I shall be sorry to lose one old friend anywhere, and that is the reason of my writing so long a letter.

I remain your faithful friend, and grateful representative,

O. MOWAT.

APPENDIX.

NOTE.—The compromise in the Quebec Resolutions of 1864 with respect to Separate Schools was at the time so acceptable to the public generally, that a recent search failed to discover but one journal in Ontario, the Newmarket *Era*, in which the propriety of the compromise was questioned. The *Globe* of 28th November, 1864, contained the following editorial article in reply to the *Era*:

THE SCHOOL QUESTION.

The Newmarket *Era* complains that by the resolutions of the Quebec Conference the continuance of the Upper Canada Separate School law "has been guaranteed for all time to come." This is true—with the exception of course that no constitutional arrangement is for all time. In a free country no constitutional system ought ever to be put forward as a finality. The new constitution which it is proposed now to adopt, in these Provinces, is simply represented as being the most satisfactory which can be carried in the present state of public sentiment. If there should ever be a great change in the feelings of the people of the Confederation —if we should ever happily reach the day when all creeds will be content to see that their religious liberties are not bound up in the principle of state paid religious education, it will be possible to amend the constitution in accordance with the altered requirements of our circumstances. But for some "time to come" we shall undoubtedly be obliged, in accordance with the proposed regulations in the new constitution, to continue the Separate School law of Upper Canada where it is.

The guarantee which displeases our contemporary, however, does not in any sense make matters worse than they are now. We now have Separate School law. We could not repeal it in the present Parliament nor in any other which could be elected without a marvel of change in public opinion. We have never had and could not get Upper Canada to be at all unanimous on the question. There are nearly or quite a score of constituencies in this section which will always return members friendly to Separatism. Lower Canada, on the other hand, has usually been just as unanimous against us even when the question was one of granting new

privileges, and would be quite as certainly so when the question was that of taking away from the Roman Catholics privileges which are already in existence. Thus we are certain that until sound views of public education become much more prevalent than they are we should always have a two-third majority in the Canadian Parliament against any attempt to repeal the Separate School law of Upper Canada. That fact, of course, is practically quite as good a guarantee to the Separatists as any constitutional regulation will be. Nothing short of a revolution in popular sentiment in Lower Canada can affect either the one or the other, and for such changes we fear we need not look for many years.

The arrangement relative to education which was made at the Quebec Conference has very great advantages for the friend of non-sectarian schools. Though the reservation is made on behalf of existing privileges for the Separatists, the power to enforce further concessions and to make further inroads upon our school system will be taken from them. Legislation upon educational questions will devolve upon local legislation and so long as the people of Upper Canada are determined to maintain their excellent educational system they will be able to resist any attack from its enemies. Hitherto the great fear has been that the assaults of sectarianism upon our school system would go on until not only should the Romish clergy succeed in withdrawing the whole Romish population of Upper Canada from the support of the common schools, but also that ultimately different Protestant sects would obtain the same privileges and thus complete the ruin of our system. Happily these evils have never been realised. The Romish clergy, though repeatedly getting the school law amended in their interest and making strong efforts to get their people to take advantage of its provisions, have never succeeded in establishing much more than 100 Separate Schools in all Upper Canada nor in getting more than a very small fraction of their people to patronize them. The Protestant sections who have agitated or petitioned for Separate Schools have never even made a serious effort to get the Legislature to give them the privileges which they profess to think that they ought to have. When the Local Legislature of Upper Canada becomes an authority on all school legislation there will be little danger of either class of Separatists making much further progress. The little injury resulting from privileges already in existence will be all that we will be obliged to suffer. If any further concessions are made, if any fresh blows are struck at our educational system the fault will be our own. We are now, as we have been, at the mercy of a parliamentary majority whose views upon this vital question do not accord with our own; and much that we deem utterly

wrong has been forced upon us by that majority. Under the new constitution that will not be the case. We will then be the protectors of our own rights, and notwithstanding the blemish which the Separate School provisions form we will be secure in the possession of a noble and invaluable school system, a boast which perhaps we can hardly make with justice under existing constitutional arrangements.

The guarantee which it is proposed to give to the Roman Catholic minority of Upper Canada carries with it moreover, a very valuable guarantee for the Protestant minority of Lower Canada. The claim of the Protestants of the Lower Province to Separate schools is, as our readers are aware, a vastly different thing from the claim of the Roman Catholics of Upper Canada. In this Province the common schools are strictly non-sectarian and their teachings do violence to the conscience of no one. All creeds are alike free from the possibility of insult or tampering. In Lower Canada, on the contrary, the public schools are undisguisably sectarian. The dissentients have only the choice between paying their money to the teaching of the creed which they do not believe, and the establishment of dissentient schools. Notwithstanding the difference in the character of the common schools, however, the minority in Lower Canada have far less advantages than the minority in Upper Canada, who have so vastly less to complain of. Not only will the guarantees relative to education which are embodied in the proposed new constitution ensure to the Protestants of Lower Canada the continuance of their rights under the existing law, but it is also proposed next session to annul the Lower Canada school law, in such a way as to make it more just to the Protestant minority. This, it is to be remembered, is a point of great importance inasmuch as in some particulars that law is now very unjust to the Protestants. We could never have secured this boon for the minority in Lower Canada without the compromise which has been arrived at respecting the whole question. Without that we could never have secured to them the guarantee of the continuance of their present limited legal right. If we could have obtained for Upper Canada the right to repeal all her Separate school legislation we should also have had to concede to Lower Canada the right of repealing all the Separate school laws now in existence there, and of making the whole population of that Province contribute to the support of the sectarian system. Surely we do well to obtain so much both for ourselves and for the minority of Lower Canada by simply consenting to the continuance of privileges in Upper Canada which we have not the power to abolish.